

# LABOUR

# ORGANISER

**OCTOBER 1948**

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## SITUATIONS VACANT

**CARSHALTON AND BANSTEAD: SUTTON AND CHEAM D.L.P.s.** — Applications are invited for the post of joint appointment of a **Full-time Organiser**. Salary and conditions in accordance with the National Agreement. Application forms can be obtained from Mr. **J. V. Strudwick, J.P., C.C., 13 Glenfield Road, Banstead, Surrey**, to whom they must be returned not later than 30th October, 1948.

**WINCHESTER D.L.P.** — Applications are invited for the post of **Secretary and Agent**. Salary and conditions in accordance with the National Agreement. Application forms can be obtained from **Councillor E. C. Neate, 30 Christchurch Road, Winchester**, and should be returned not later than 30th October, 1948.

**CARDIFF CITY I.L.P.** — Applications are invited for the post of **Full-time Secretary-Organiser**. Salary and conditions in accordance with the National Agreement. Application forms can be obtained from **Phil Williams, 4 Pentre Street, Cardiff**, to whom they must be returned not later than October 25th, 1948.

**LEEK D.L.P.**—Applications are invited for the post of **Secretary-Agent**. Salary and conditions in accordance with the National Agreement. Application forms can be obtained from the **Chairman, Leek Divisional Labour Party, Rose Cottage, Stanley Moss Lane, Stockton Brook, Staffs.**, to whom they must be returned not later than 30th October, 1948.

**BOROUGH OF LEYTON L.P.**—Applications are invited for the position of **Secretary-Agent**. Salary and conditions in accordance with the terms of the National Agreement. Application forms may be obtained from **E. P. Cavanaugh, 8 Francis Road, Leyton, London, E.10**, to whom they should be returned not later than Saturday, 30th October, 1948.

**PEMBROKESHIRE D.L.P.** — Applications are invited for the post of **Full-time Secretary-Organiser**. Salary and conditions in accordance with National Agreement. Application forms can be obtained from the **Secretary, Councillor Charles E. A. Green, 10 Belmont Terrace, Pembroke, Pembrokeshire**, to whom they must be returned not later than 15th October, 1948.

**CANNOCK D.L.P.**—Applications are invited for the post of **Full-time Secretary-Agent**. Salary and conditions in accordance with National Agreement. Application forms from **Secretary, Cannock Divisional Labour Party, 65 Market Square, Cannock, Staffs.**, to whom they must be returned by 30th October.

**SEDGEFIELD D.L.P.** — Applications are invited for the position of **Full-time Secretary-Agent**. Salary and conditions in accordance with the terms of the National Agreement. Proficiency certificates not a necessity for the appointment. Application forms obtainable from **Coun. Tom Hudson, Front Street, Trimdon Grange, Co. Durham**, to whom they must be returned not later than 11th October, for the post of **Full-time Agent**. The appointment 1948.

**FINCHLEY AND FRIERN BARNET D.L.P.**—Applications are invited for the post of **Full-time Agent**. Salary and conditions in accordance with National Agreement. Application forms from **Mrs. H. McCarthy, 63, Raleigh Drive, Friern Barnet, London, N.20**, to whom they must be returned not later than 30th October, 1948.

**NELSON AND COLNE D.L.P.** — Applications are invited for the position of **Political Agent**. Salary and conditions in accordance with National Agreement. Knowledge of a unified method in dealing with membership and up-to-date methods in the conduct of elections are essential. Application forms may be obtained from **Coun. J. Shepherd, c/o Labour Rooms, Vernon Street, Nelson, Lancs.**, and must be returned not later than October 30th, 1948.

**DEVIZES D.L.P.**—Applications are invited for the post of **Full-time Agent**. The appointment will be made in accordance with the National Agreement. Application forms can be obtained from **Mr. S. F. Goodchild, 4 Cross Lane, Marlborough, Wilts**, to whom they should be returned not later than Saturday, 23rd October.

## THE "SAVETIME" CANVASS BOOK

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# The Labour Organiser

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## Town and Country

"Labour swept the country at that election (1945) because simultaneously, and for the first time, it attracted large numbers of voters from the countryside and from the middle classes." So writes an anonymous correspondent in a recent issue of the "Times Literary Supplement" in an article on Archbishop Temple, going on with the challenging statement that to Temple "as much as to any man is due the fact that on July 5, 1945, hundreds of thousands of middle-class homes decided to 'give Labour a chance'."

Archbishop Temple is dead, but the message of his life—the inseparable nature of ethics and economics has penetrated deeply into countless middle-class homes. In 1945, it was interpreted to mean "Vote Labour." In 1950 it can mean the same thing. It may be true that current shortages and the frustration caused by essential controls have been responsible for a good deal of discontent among the middle classes. It is certainly true that the picture has not always been seen in its national perspective.

*But Labour's achievements put across in their national setting tell a story of benefits to Britain's people which cannot be denied, even by those who may not themselves have been the greatest gainers.*

And what of our country folk? It was certainly for very different reasons that so many voted Labour in 1945. Successive Conservative Governments before the war had brought poverty and insecurity to rural Britain, and at least Labour could scarcely do worse. So thousands of country folk also decided to "give Labour a chance." Writing independently this month, two correspondents reach remarkable agreement upon how Labour's hold on rural Britain can be maintained and strengthened. Both agree upon the need for an individual approach to each village based on understanding and respect for the live force of parish pump politics. Both agree that in every village a key man can and must be found and that the hard-worked Member or candidate must be personally known to the inhabitants.

In rural areas, propaganda is a powerful weapon. No section of the community is benefiting more surely under Labour rule and to no section is it more important that Labour should again be returned to power to carry on the good work.

Grand work has already been done in winning over to Labour many of the traditional Tory strongholds of rural Britain. But the countryman, often more slow and suspicious in pledging his political allegiance to any Party than is the town dweller, will not be lightly won.

*Only by quiet, persistent work, endless patience and understanding can we ensure a strengthening and extension of Labour support in rural areas.*

# Campaigns That I Remember

By HERBERT DRINKWATER

"TELL us, from out of your experience, some of the things which make or mar an election campaign," wrote the Editor: and thereby set me a task which would require lots more space than I dare to take.

Experience, for me, has been long and eventful. I remember the 1880 General Election, or rather the petition which followed it and disenfranchised my native city for four years on account of widespread bribery and corruption. My Dad was a witness, and came home from the hearing with exactly the same sum for giving evidence as he had been offered for his vote.

There's a moral there for someone, but instead of choosing the one about the profits of honesty I reflect that since the franchise was extended (as it was at the following election, and several times since), the price of votes has progressively gone down. To-day a vote won't fetch the price of a packet of ten, and is therefore unsaleable.

## Booing the "Blues"

My first election activities began in the 1885 and 1886 elections but I confess they were confined to booing the "Blues" and spitting at the Tory carriages on polling day. But by 1892 I had developed a contrary complex, which showed when, as a cub-reporter on a Liberal paper, I committed the unpardonable sin of cheering the Tory candidate from the Press table. After the meeting I was rushed to the Tory candidate, got a pat on the back, an invitation to the Club that night, and to the Committee Rooms next day.

My visit to the Rooms taught me something I've not yet forgotten, and my visit next day to the Editor taught me a few things (about myself) which I have forgotten; and just as well. But what I saw in my first election caused me for over 40 years to advocate the closing of pubs on polling day. And now it doesn't matter, for, since the abolition of beer (or of the real stuff we used to have), its potency as an election bribe has diminished. The cost of getting a dozen men drunk each night and sending them to upset

opponents' meetings is to-day prohibitive. I do not mourn the good old times.

In the nineties Socialism came to the fore. In '93 I attended my first Socialist meeting and I joined the I.L.P. in 1899. Electioneering of a new order had begun; propaganda fights were being made, and lost of course. A Socialist fight in the Low Hill ward of Liverpool was my first real experience of Labour contests. Soon afterwards, down in my native Gloucestershire, Charlie Fox, one of the grand old pioneers (who told me he had walked all round the coast of Britain) challenged the Tories in one of the I.L.P.'s first fights. He polled about 300 votes.

*Since those days I have been "in" at hundreds of contests (though the candidates have nearly always been "out"). In some years it has been my lot to visit over 100 contests, local and parliamentary. Memories of what has happened—of "the things which mar or make an election"—crowd too thick for coherent writing. I must sit back a bit and think.*

\* \* \*

I must switch off these recollections. There is nothing destroys one's juvenility like having memories: and I'm not going to destroy my youth yet—not even for the "L.O."

Instead, I propose to draw a few general lessons without particularising any special campaign. Read on.

What is an election campaign anyway? And when does one begin? Almost every one of my candidates has spoken, after his defeat, of beginning right away to lay the foundations for victory "next time." And the few winners, always a bit surprised at their luck, have invariably spoken of "consolidating" the victory, by fresh and constant efforts.

## That Eternal Something

It seems therefore that each fresh campaign should begin before the last is finished. "That's O.K. with me," as the modern lass says, and rightly; for elections, like liberties, are won by eternal something — eternal work,



eternal vigilance, eternal all-the-year-round Party work.

In early years our election campaigns were mostly true to name. Short and sweet, they began and ended with the election, and though the faithful rallied to a contest from far and wide, the main burden and responsibility was local.

To-day we have built up a mighty central machine, and no campaign is a watertight affair. In general propaganda, in the provision of literature, speakers, staff, publicity, in finance, in all aspects of planning and working out either the long or the short campaign there is direction and help from above.

Our old individualism may rebel, but the co-operative spirit pays best. An election in Much Muckinpuddle or even in Little Muckinton is to-day a national affair. The conversion of the natives to Civilisation and Socialism (how sweetly alliterative) is sought not alone by the faithful few of the countryside, but by organisers, executives, committees, miles away, and by a Head Office always approachable and, at least, with an unsurpassed knowledge of the job.

### Way to Victory

My advice is to take that help; to co-operate; to let your Party take its full share in every nation-wide effort; to take a share of all literature published; to try to lead in your County and lend a hand where needed; to fashion your Party so that it becomes the ever responsive yet creative partner in the alliance and purpose of national and local parts. For that's the way to achievement and to victory.

Could I boil down all my impressions of past campaigns into one theme, or extract therefrom one central lesson, it would be that lasting victory (not fortuitous success) comes soonest and surest to those Parties who do believe in Socialism, and preach it *all the year round*; to those who *do* begin the next campaign before the last is finished; to those, in short, whose activities are manifold, consistent and persistent.

I have known elections won almost without effort; certainly without organisation. Equally I have known election after election, superbly fought, with noble sacrifice and splendid organisation, only to bring disappointment (mark, not disillusion) time after time. Yet the fact remains that it is

those same Parties mentioned above who achieve that long-lasting public opinion and conviction which the pioneers set out to create.

*Campaigns which only win elections, and do not lead to permanent conviction of the people, are like some apples in my hedge — bittersweets, that momentarily please the palate and then revolt the inner man.*

### By Hook or By Crook

It is, after all, comparatively easy to bamboozle a public to voting one's way. The trick is as old as elections themselves. The older parties, having no permanent creed, always set out, not so much to convert a people (except to the opportunist programme of the moment) as to win elections by hook or by crook; and mostly the latter. The public, inured to being tricked, took 50 years to get over it.

To convert or convince a public is to do a permanent job. The constant campaign succeeds there. It is cheaper too in the long run. Check up those three statements with any intelligent representative of one of the great advertising firms who have "got there." They will agree: and that is why I plump for the Parties who are constant campaigners—the all-the-year-round workers, the consistent and persistent ones.

Here we find the Parties who run discussion and speakers' classes, winter lectures, summer tours and propaganda, do training, who buy and sell Head Office output of literature, who run local papers in places, who do canvasses, and organise membership in the big and modern way.

It was my joy sometimes to visit some of these parties and to correspond with others; for they inspire. The pioneers used to shout "Socialism is Life!" from the house-tops, or more correctly from the horse-troughs. Socialism is life and a busy Party teems with it—so much life indeed that there isn't even time to quarrel.

\* \* \*

*My space is gone; and "the half is never told." Perhaps I shall write again. Shall I? Must I?*

*Once, I required hundreds of folders for personal Labour correspondents. Let some of these have recollection, and answer for the others. For I am lonely now—and the postman rarely calls.*

# Nursing a Constituency

By GEORGE WALLACE, M.P.

*"With the patience of Job, the wisdom of Solomon and the hide of an elephant, no constituency need be hopeless."*

WHEN I was first approached to write this article I felt that the title itself was misleading because it suggested to me the old methods of kissing the babies, distributing with great unction school prizes, and handing out pennies to the children of "the deserving poor."

Such methods are not the usual approach for the Labour M.P. or Prospective Candidate and, thanks to the example set by Labour representatives in public life, are now mainly methods of the past. There is only one way, hard work, service to the community and full participation in the life of the area.

To my mind it is a great asset to be a resident in the constituency or, if not, within close call. It is also a great advantage to have served or to serve as a member of a Local Authority, especially within the constituency, as this does give a background knowledge of local affairs which beyond doubt proves invaluable when one becomes the elected representative in Parliament.

Let me at once say that I do not personally believe that when one becomes an M.P. it is wise to continue as a Local Authority representative. Being a Member of Parliament for such an area as the Chislehurst Division is quite a full-time job. I know many will disagree with me but, especially with Labour in power, being a Member of Parliament has become a seven-day week job. After all, if one does not intend to carry out the job 100 per cent., why take it on?

## Personal Service

As I have already indicated personal service and undivided attention to the affairs of the constituency is the only way to do the job and to gain the confidence of the people. Personal service indicates a personal interview service such as is carried out week after week by many Labour M.P.s and is not new as far as our movement is concerned.

How often it is done depends on the type of constituency, its nearness to Westminster and whether the Member resides within or near to it. How some of our Members manage to cope with all-night sittings, long journeys to and

from their constituencies and then to spend long sessions patiently listening to constituents' troubles baffles me. Mind you, a good Agent is a great help, and we hope to have one in Chislehurst soon!

Some constituencies, like my own, are very scattered. Nevertheless with the co-operation of the three local authorities in the area, personal interviews are given every Friday evening, every Saturday morning and once a month on Saturday afternoon in the respective Council Offices. The fact that these interviews are held in the Council Offices and not Party Headquarters is very important. At the moment we have no headquarters anyway, but it must be remembered that one represents the area as a whole. Some people of the floating vote type would be diffident in calling at any Party Headquarters and, in any case, the Town Hall or Council Offices are usually well known to all and centrally situated.

## The Friendly Note

Interviews create correspondence where cases have to be taken up and this leads to the treatment of correspondence generally. Always deal with it personally. Many of us are unable to afford full-time secretaries but even if this facility exists, always handle your mail personally and if a typewriter is used always give a personal signature. As occasion demands do not be above writing a friendly note by hand.

Where Ministers replies are received always pass forward the original reply along. I have a deep seated mistrust of the rubber stamp signature and this lack of trust is shared by many. Avoid, as far as possible, sending out formal acknowledgements or pro-forma letters. They lack the personal touch.

In keeping in contact with a constituency the local press must not be ignored. Scathing comments on the "Local Rag" serve no useful purpose whatever and should be avoided. The average local journalist is a decent chap with a difficult job to do. Help him all you can. Do not expect them to be thought-readers and to turn up



and report meetings they have not heard about. It is surprising how this sort of situation so often arises. Make arrangements for regular meetings between press representatives and your Agent (if any) or yourself.

Personally I see my local press representatives every Tuesday and give them statements, details of engagements and answer questions. Remember that your local newspaper is always pleased to receive news with a local background.

### Principles, not Personalities

Avoid personalities like a plague and never give your opponent personal publicity. Introducing the name of your Tory opponent when attacking the Tory Party on the public platform is assisting the Tories to publicise their own candidate. Concentrate on putting over our own Party policy and record, of course, some references and comparisons against your opponents have to be made, but never let this be the main plank in your platform.

Good comradeship between yourself and your Party workers is assumed but at the same time do not take too much for granted. Tact and patience is often needed and within a Movement composed of volunteers, so often working at the cost of personal sacrifice, never drive but always lead. Always be on the look-out for new ideas and it is well worthwhile to spend a deal of time encouraging your younger workers and hearing their views.

At the same time never forget the work and sacrifice of our older pioneers. Their wisdom and experience, properly heeded, might often save you from rushing into an awkward situation.

*To sum up. Be prepared to have the patience of Job, the wisdom of Solomon and the hide of an elephant. Fight your fight to the last ounce for principles and not personalities. Give of everything that is within you and in so doing inspire your workers. Do this and no constituency need be "hopeless."*

## READERS' FORUM

The letter from Plashet Ward of East Ham published under this heading in your August issue has caused considerable good-natured humour amongst the members of the North Hainault Ward of Ilford. It so happens that our Chairman (Cllr. C. F. Green) whose letter, detailing our achievements also appeared in the same issue, is a product of East Ham and spent many years in the service of that Party before migrating to Ilford.

In spurring us on to greater efforts, he never fails to quote East Ham as an example to be followed in almost all things.

We had looked forward to the publication of his answer to the challenge contained in your July issue, when, almost side by side, appeared the letter from East Ham showing that they had done even better than we. It seems as if the oft quoted example has now been doubly emphasised.

We feel we can glean some consolation from knowing that our recruiting records have been achieved in a Tory ridden area, whilst those of our near neighbours in East Ham are, to some extent, reaping the fruit of the labours of our Chairman and others of many years ago.

Nevertheless, we join with our comrades of East Ham in the great march forward to achieve an unprecedented Party membership.

MRS. A. HALLS,  
(Social Secretary,  
North Hainault Ward).

### "ONE TWO THREE"

*Congratulations to South Hackney Labour Party on their bright new journal "One Two Three." (If you're wondering about the name, the reason is that the Party's Headquarters are at 123, Homerton High Street.)*

*Its aim is to show Party members and their friends that there is a live and attractive organisation in their midst offering endless scope and the standard set by the September variety. If future issues live up to number, "One Two Three" should certainly be invaluable in keeping members on the mark and bringing in new recruits. It shows once again what can be done with even the limited resources of a duplicated newsletter.*

# Training Our Future Agents

By L. H. M. HILLYARD, General Secretary, Agents Union

BY the time these notes appear in print the Adjustments Board and the Union Executive will both have met. Apart from tidying up a few items still outstanding arising from our "Charter" proposals we shall be mainly concerned with the scheme for the training and recruitment of Agency staff.

There is, as I have said before, good reason to feel that the Union's proposals will be adopted, perhaps not in full and probably with a fair amount of amendment.

One important principle emerges in preliminary talks. If the scheme is to succeed it must provide young men and women with practical experience of "constituency" organising. Any attempt to train potential agents through the regional offices and staff of the party would be a fatal mistake for it would undermine the intention of the scheme and necessarily involve Union opposition.

## Guiding Hand of Experience

Our view on this matter is clear. We say the only way that the Party can be sure its future agents are able and competent to discharge the heavy and new responsibilities now devolving upon them, is to provide a period of training, both theoretical and practical. This practical experience must be obtained in the constituencies under the supervision of experienced agents.

It is also becoming clearer that the scheme can only function immediately to a limited degree and that, in the main, outside London the training ground will tend to be in County Boroughs with the Borough Organiser acting as tutor. Birmingham is a good example—here the possibility of training a number of future agents exists and I have no doubt that Harold Nash will be keeping an eye on this.

However, even should immediate application of the proposals be difficult, the future gain to the party is so great that a start should be made without delay. I am confident that progress

will be made in the right direction before the end of the year.

Although opinions have been divided, London District has nevertheless for a long time tended to the view that the Party's agency staff, through its union organisation, should play a more active rôle in the training of the parties' key workers and have even made specific proposals for the inclusion of other than full-time organisational workers for inclusion in a special, or associate, class of membership.

## London Leads Again

The Union has never yet accepted the latter point of view although there is some sympathy for it. This background provides the story behind London District's new idea. Two schools of an instructional nature are to be held on September 23 and October 9. At these John Pinkerton will deal with "Representation of the People Bill," and W. J. Stimpson with "Canvassing and Election Day Techniques." These schools will be open to all members of the District, those who are taking the Labour Party Study Course and "key" party workers who I understand are to be nominated by a District member.

*This is breaking new ground with a vengeance and we shall watch the experiment with great interest.*

Developments of this kind which tend to share the knowledge, experience and specialised skill of older members of the Union are particularly useful at this time when the Party is faced with the necessity of expanding its existing staff and "gearing up" its organisation for the elections that lie ahead. Co-operation between the District organisations of the Union and Regional Councils in his form of work could be a useful development.

*There is no one better qualified to lecture on the problems of constituency organisation than the experienced Party Constituency Agent whose services in this respect have not been widely used by the Party in the past.*



## MORTONS FOR STATIONERY

Write for samples and new List of ENVELOPES, DUPLICATING PAPERS, STENCILS, INKS, TYPEWRITER RIBBONS and CARBONS etc., as supplied to scores of Labour Party and Trade Union Offices  
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# Our Young "Commando" Unit

By COUNCILLOR R. WILCOCK, Secretary Nelson L.P.

IN Nelson our branch of the League of Youth has been formed and re-formed several times, and each time it has inclined towards the social side in its activities. It has never proved a really steady attraction for the serious type of young person who wants to devote more time to learning about politics.

Mind you, I am not condemning the League of Youth. They are perfectly entitled to conduct their business in their own way and enjoy themselves as they please. Indeed, it is a good thing that some of us can cater for the lighter things in life.

*But facts have got to be faced: and the fact that some special provision seemed necessary for "politically-minded" youth, led us in Nelson to make an experiment in a new Youth organisation.*

It started with a public challenge to all Labour youth: "What are you doing for your Party?" We posed this question in several issues of our local Labour journal. When the new organisation got under way we placed as few restrictions on it as possible. On the other hand it was made very clear that this was a youth organisation appealing specially to those between 21 and 35 years of age.

Our idea was to form a group of conscientious young Labour workers who would realise that their youth and energy were of vital importance to the movement. Instead of being an ordinary static organisation with rigidly defined objects and duties, they would have to be ready to face a variety of different jobs.

## Lifeguards to the Rescue

If ever Ward organisation broke down then this group of lifeguards would be ready to come to the rescue. Individually they would be expected to collect subscriptions or distribute our local Labour paper, the "Nelson Gazette," in any part of the town. During elections they would be a specially-prepared group ready to go into action at the weak points.

In other words, they were to be a sort of "Commando" unit at the disposal of the Party agent.

It took some time to choose a name

suitable for this new organisation. At last we decided on "Labour Action Group" because we thought it conveyed the right emphasis on the Group's main rôle—*political action*.

At the first meeting we had twenty recruits including one young Conservative spy, whose presence was connived at by the local Tory agent. As usual the numbers dwindled during the summer months owing to the difficulty of maintaining week by week activities.

## Special Tasks

Nevertheless, the Action Group has been a valuable asset locally. We have been able to call on it for special work during by-elections, and members of the Group have willingly accepted extra work in various parts of the town when other workers have retired.

As an organised group they performed a particularly commendable job of work collecting house-to-house questionnaires in connection with Nelson's pioneer "Beat the Crisis Campaign."

As I have already intimated, the main stumbling-block has been the difficulty of arranging continuous weekly activities. It is clearly impossible to arrange a guaranteed syllabus of events when there is every likelihood of it being broken by members having extra Party work to do. The answer to that problem, of course, lies in one's powers of organisation.

Some may say that this Action Group stuff ought to be a job for the League of Youth; that there is no need for a separate organisation. It would be great if the League of Youth attracted no one else except the young person who is devoted to Labour politics and wants to work his fingers and brain away for the Party. If such were the case Labour organisers could sit back and face the future with a chuckle.

But the majority of youth are not devoted to politics. Not even Labour's youth! That is why, here in Nelson, we decided to care specially for those few who are.

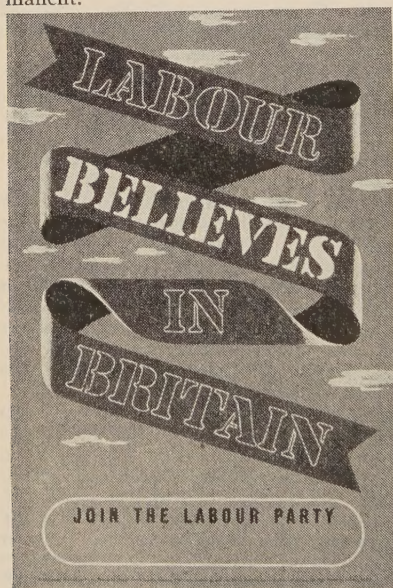
*We hope that by raising them to the status of lifeguards for the Party we shall make them into true Socialist leaders of the community.*

# Making A Canvass Board

By JOHN M. SMITH, Camlachie D.L.P.

IT is generally agreed that a uniform system of canvass recording and control would be a boon to all parties. I have heard this expressed at meetings of Agents, Summer Schools and during recent bye-elections.

The essence of such a system is that it must be effective both during the canvass and on Polling Day when it must give finger-tip control and avoid any delay. It must be simple to establish and to operate, and economical in first cost and in the amount of labour required to prepare and to operate. Among other qualities, it should be accurate, adaptable, portable and permanent.



Here is a window recruiting card just issued by Headquarters to help in preparations for the Spring election campaigns. The size is 12 inches by 8 inches, and the banner is in red-brown set against an attractive blue background. Space is reserved for local details. Prices post free from Labour Publications Department, Transport House, Smith Square, London, S.W.1, are: 12 copies, 4s. 6d.; 50 copies, 16s. 6d.; and 100 copies £1 10s.

*In the "Organiser" of June, 1947, W. J. Stimpson of Deptford outlined a suitable system. This has been taken up in Scotland, modified and developed into the best yet.*

The Register, pasted on cards, is used for canvassing thus avoiding errors in copying. Plain cards 9 in. x 4 in. are used. No printing is required but exact size is important.

The canvasser marks the card in pencil F. A. or D. against the name of each person canvassed. There is enough space for an odd note against each name. Removals are noted on back. That is all the canvasser need do.

## Control Board

Now for the central feature. In the Committee Room the clerk puts a red or blue dash against the electors number according to canvass indication, just as on a wall-sheet but the same cards are used throughout.

The cards are then placed in the Control Board which has a series of manilla pockets to hold them in such a way that only the top quarter inch and half an inch at the left hand side of each card is visible. It will at once be realised that what is seen is the street name at the top and the register numbers with their red or blue dashes. In this way is built up a picture of how the canvass is going.

## Canvass Index

When a card is given out it is replaced by another of a distinctive colour on which is recorded the name of the person taking it. The position of these coloured cards shows where canvassing is going on.

The Board looks like an expensive visible index. In fact it can be made in less than an hour from materials costing a few pence. Once made it is used again and again. All that is needed is to paste up the new Register.

## Polling Day

On polling day, operation is simplicity itself. As the "numbers" come in from the polling station they are marked off, by the clerk extending the appropriate colour right through the register number. Again we have this coloured picture of how the voting is



going. If the checker sends in names and addresses, the numbers can be found at a glance on the Control Board.

Periodically, out goes the card for calling up. Its place is taken by the coloured card which is again used to record who has taken it and also to note any numbers which come in during its absence. The coloured card also shows where the polliers are working.

When the card is returned, the numbers are quickly transferred and it is ready to go out again. There is no frantic sorting with workers kept waiting.

*In a recent election, two women comrades, who had never seen this method before, handled two polling districts with a combined electorate of over twelve thousand. It did NOT break down in the last hour and the result was a record Labour vote.*

Try it. You, too, will be convinced of its superiority over any other system.

Here are some tips on how to make the Control Board.

## Canvass Card

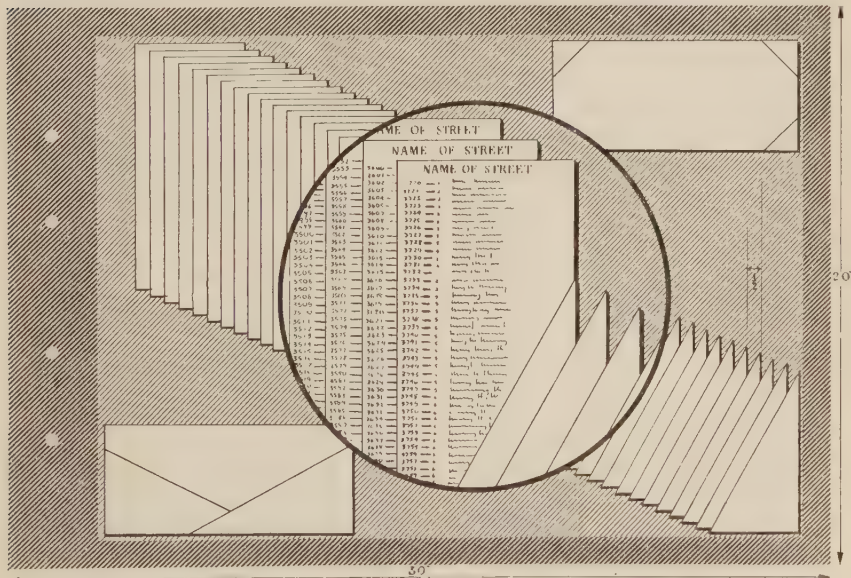
For the canvass card, no printing is necessary, but the exact size is important—9 in. x 4 in.—easy to handle and can be carried in a coat pocket. Street name written close to top and register pasted with numbers close to left hand edge. Takes 50-60 names, with space for odd note beside each. Removals are noted on back. Cards should be numbered consecutively.

## Pockets

A small envelope (6 in. x 3½ in.) makes two pockets. Stick down flap then cut from corner to corner.

## Control Board

Stiff card 30 in. x 20 in. Strengthen edges with 1 in. strips glued on. Start near right hand edge. Draw 40 parallel lines ½ in. apart. Remember that the first card will be at top left and last one at bottom right. Draw the outline of these two. Draw a line from bottom corner of one to other. With this line as guide paste on the 40 pockets taking care that the back edge always lies on the parallel line.



Our diagram shows the finished board with some cards in position. Pocket at bottom left is for extra cards. Card at top right has details of Polling District, etc. This can be replaced in the event of alteration. Board can hold 2,500 names if necessary. For big Polling Districts it is better to have 2,000, i.e., average 50 per card. Boards can then be fastened book fashion with key rings. A plain cover could have map, etc., pasted on. The whole will lie easily on a small table.

# Winning the Villages

By R. BELBEN, Secretary and Agent, Clitheroe

*Organising in a rural constituency is a job calling for endless hard work and patience, but it can succeed.*

**O**RGANISING problems in a County constituency are vastly different from those of a Borough constituency.

In the first place, one is confronted with the problem of how best to tackle "community" interests. By which I mean that small parishes each have their own problems, peculiar to themselves. Villages only a few miles apart are inhabited by people of entirely different temperaments. It is therefore useless to try to tackle organising work with a set plan in mind. What suits village "A" is of no use at all for village "B." And when you have arrived at some form of solution for both these, village "C" sets the agent an entirely different problem.

## Know Your People

My advice, therefore, is to tackle the problem with an open mind. Get to know the people, mix with them, and try to understand thoroughly their point of view. Remember that the social life of a village is very different from that of a town. The average village will be running functions of all kinds during the winter—for the village hall fund, the District Nurse Fund, the British Legion, etc. And the point to remember is that ALL the village usually takes part. All go to the Conservative dance and all go to the Labour Party dance. Therefore politics must be kept very discreetly in the background.

The only way to get over your message is to do the job quietly and without too much fuss. *Attempt to do the big splash, and the applecart is properly upset.*

One of the soundest methods of organisation in a country village is in the formation of a women's section. It can do a vast amount of valuable work in a way that is not possible through the usual Party machine.

There are villages in my own constituency that return all Labour Members to the Parish Council. There are others where the Tory vote is 95 per cent. of the electorate. Obviously it is in the latter type that produces the most difficult problems of organisation.

The way to tackle these villages is to find one person (usually to be found)

who takes an intelligent interest in politics. Get him on your side and he will tell you all there is to know about the life of the village and its people. He knows everyone, when they were born, who their parents were, and their politics. Get him to be your local secretary, and very soon he will have a small committee on which you can rely to do the work at election times.

At this point, you will probably ask: How is such a person to be found? The answer is to go to the local copper and ask. If he cannot help, try the newsagent and ask for readers who buy the *Herald*. There will be some without a doubt. If failure again, try the insurance agent. He might be a Tory so you will draw a blank. What about the "local"? Politics are often discussed in country pubs, and if they are not, start an argument about what the Government has done for the farmers and someone will soon pick you up and show they are on your side.

Then again, there may be a branch of a Trade Union in the locality. I personally have received some help in this direction. A local Union assisted by sending me the names and addresses of all members contributing to the Political Fund. From that list I soon found a few people willing to join the Party and there is now an efficient committee operating in that particular village.

Another point to remember is that villagers like to see their member or candidate very often. The influence of the candidate will often bring results where the agent has failed. At least that has been my experience.

## Set The Target

It is a great help to give every village an incentive—some big target to achieve in the way of money-raising efforts. Give each village a target and they will quickly compete with one another and be ready enough to criticise those villages not pulling their weight. I estimate that my Divisional Party and Local Parties together have had a combined income each of the past four years of over £4,000 per year. And in trying to work out comparisons, I

*(Continued on page 13)*



# Rural Approaches

By IDRIS WILLIAMS, Secretary and Agent, Brecon and Radnor

It is only three months since I became Agent in the Brecon and Radnor Constituency, one of the largest territorially in the country, and one which contains both rural and industrial areas. I am already convinced that one has not served a full apprenticeship as an agent until one has experienced party work in rural areas.

*The problem of "getting it across" involves quite a different set of circumstances from those prevailing in urban areas. In the countryside, the summer*

## WINNING THE VILLAGES

*(Continued from page 12)*

traced back Balance Sheets for a number of years and found the average from 1930 to the war period was in the region of £400.

So something can be achieved by hard work AND PATIENCE. For rest assured the county Agent must have unlimited patience. You will find that having started a small committee in a village the world seems bright and cheerful. But before you get home that committee is dead, and you will have to start all over again. Never mind, have another go. Be determined that you are going to get a committee. Patience and Perseverance will win through in the end.

### Those Long Winter Evenings

There is one last point to remember. A steady and regular flow of literature is a sure method of propaganda. People in the remote villages have no cinemas and all the more time for reading in the winter months. Give them all they can read. If you are worried about who is going to pay for it, do the same as I did. Put your case before the Executive and ask for a fixed sum (in my case £200) for propaganda work during the next two winters. Those who have money will pay for those who have none. My £200 was guaranteed in a few weeks and a regular supply of literature will be purchased for all villages and towns.

*The countryside must be won and it is only by persistent work that we shall capture the county constituencies for Labour.*

*months are the important ones, because if Labour is to hold the rural constituencies, every hamlet and village must be a focal point for propaganda.*

The personal touch, too, becomes a vital feature. Every parish pump is politics of a vital character for the rural worker; every difficulty in a village or on a farm must be treated with seriousness and understanding.

We have just concluded a loud speaker campaign tour of this constituency entailing sixty meetings. It is strenuous work but effective, particularly when the candidate or Member of Parliament makes it his business to be familiar with every local problem.

### Well-Prepared Campaign

Such a campaign must be thoroughly prepared as regards every detail of arrangement to avoid a slip-up. This is particularly difficult in small isolated areas where there are no contacts.

Organisation in the villages demands careful attention. Often a key man found in a country village makes the difference between success and failure. Never forget that, although his influence is on the wane, the Country Squire is still a power in the communal life of these villages.

Finally, and this applies to industrial as well as agricultural areas, Parties are not always alive to the necessity for publicising the candidate or Member of Parliament.

The force of this is seen in Tory organisation where the Tory candidate is billed on every poster as patron of this fete or that show. It is an important and elementary need for our Parties to do everything possible to keep the candidate or M.P. in the public eye.

*The period between now and 1950 is a crucial period for determining success. The Labour case must be "put over" more clearly than ever before; its achievements must penetrate into every cottage and farmstead for success in rural constituencies will be vital in ensuring Labour's continued good work as the Government of this country.*

# Why Trust Deeds Are Necessary

By JOHN PINKERTON

THE re-organisation of new parties under re-distribution is creating some few problems in relation to Party premises which, in many instances, are owned by a constituency party that is being split up.

*Some of these problems are being made more difficult because there are no traceable deeds or documents relating to these properties, nor any records in the minute books as to who are the trustees and the terms and conditions under which the property is held.*

In the last few months some cases have come to light which might have had serious consequences. Two of these illustrate the importance of holding property in a manner that gives full control to the members through its representative body, the General Committee.

## Dangers To Be Avoided

The first instance concerns a house bought some years ago by a Party, and used as party offices and for meetings ever since. During the depression period a mortgage was taken out on the property, but this has since been redeemed by the hard work and endeav-

our of all members of the particular Party. The General Committee were justly proud of their efforts, and as their constituency was being split up they wished that their premises should continue to be of benefit to the new party.

When the documents were examined in order to effect a transfer of the property to the new constituency party, it was found that absolute title and ownership was vested in three members of the General Committee, who were ostensibly the trustees. There were no conditions whatever concerning the use, management or disposal of the property. Had the three members been unscrupulous individuals they could have disposed of the property and pocketed the proceeds of the sale without any reference whatever to the General Committee.

## Trustees Sued for Debt

The second case had the opposite effect. Here a local Party appointed four trustees for club premises which were rented. The size and cost of the premises were rather large and ambitious for a small local Party, but things went moderately well until war-time conditions and difficulties made it impossible to carry on. Instead of relieving themselves of the lease and cutting their losses, they postponed the evil day until finally the trustees were sued for outstanding debts. Distraint notices were served on all four of them, and only a last minute effort by individual members of the Party saved the homes of the trustees from being sold up.

It is all very well for us to say that we have no unscrupulous members in our Party or that we would not allow our trustees to be subjected to such treatment because of our laxity, but the probable consequences of both these instances could have been avoided by the drawing up of documents which would protect the Party and trustees alike. In any case such unbusinesslike methods are not worthy of a Party such as ours.

## Legal Entity

There are two ways which a Party can adopt for the holding of property, but the first essential is to recognise that the Party is not a legal entity, and cannot sue or be sued as a Party.

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Therefore, it must either be made a legal entity or some person or persons must act on its behalf.

To make the Party a legal entity it must be made into an organisation registered as a Friendly Society under the Friendly and Industrial Provident Societies Act, and each member of the Society would have a share or shares in the Society, and the rules of the Society would have to be approved by the Registrar of Friendly Societies.

This is sometimes done by Parties owning property and the ownership is vested in the members owning shares in the Society. This means the establishment of a separate and distinct society and the electing of a separate Committee elected by the shareholders for the management of the property.

Whilst this system works quite well and satisfactorily in many instances, there is the danger of control being entirely removed from the General Committee of the Party, and the problem created by a number of shareholders desiring for one reason or another to withdraw their share capital at any time.

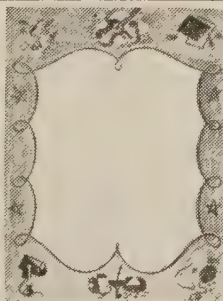
#### Model Trust Deed

The best way of holding property for the benefit of Party members is by Trust Deed. This is a document drawn

up and subscribed by the Trustees appointed by the General Committee and the Chairman and Secretary of that Committee. The document contains a number of clauses determining the management of the premises, the appointment of trustees, the disbursement of any profits, the duties of the Trustees and their responsibility to the General Committee and the responsibilities of the General Committee to the Trustees. There is an additional clause relating to disputes between the Trustees and the Party, and a further one which provides for the reversion of the property to the National Executive Committee of the Party in the event of the particular local or constituency party going out of existence.

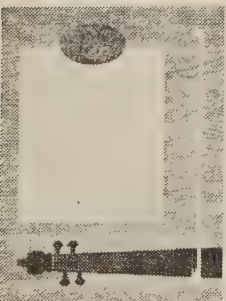
*It will be seen that by this method every eventuality is covered and control is kept in the hands of the General Committee whilst both it and the trustees are protected against any laxity of the other.*

Head Office have a model trust deed available which is suitable for all parties. Now is the time to examine the documents relating to any premises the Party may own or hold and make certain that they do provide for the complete control desired by the General Committee and for the Party as a whole.



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# The Show Goes On

By LEFTWING

*Here was the first really big "do" for 20 years. All available finances and untold energy had gone into it . . . and even continual rain couldn't prevent a triumphant success.*

THE only thing wrong with our Fete and Rally on August 21st was the weather! Continual rain was more than enough to damp everybody's spirits except those of the people that bore the brunt of the hard organising work that was necessary before the event. Distance alone prevented many comrades from giving active help before the fete, and Charlbury comrades pulled their weight in no uncertain manner.

*What a spirit, and the only spirit that will win this Division for Labour at the next election. For the best part of seven weeks the Agent together with the Charlbury members had toiled to make the event the success it deserved, helped on by national publicity in our own "Daily Herald," and with a galaxy of speakers the like we have not seen in this area for years. All to no avail, the rain washed all our hopes into the grass.*

Enough to dampen the enthusiasm of the most ardent member, you say! I agree, and that is why I am proud to report on the following:—

At 8 p.m. on the night of the fete the Charlbury members had gathered in the Committee Tent and the Agent was thanking them for all their hard work. Up spoke one member who had stood on the gate as steward all day, and with clothes literally oozing water: "We don't want thanks; promise us one thing—that you will help us put the whole show on again this year." That was the first time I had seen the Agent give a real smile all day. "O.K.," he said, "off we go from here—regard this as a rehearsal for the next show." Then as a further thought: "No dance tonight, chaps, we are all too wet, and there is no one in the condition to run it."

The scene shifts now to comrade Fred Hibberd's house where all are engaged on "drying out." A knock at the door, and in walks Comrade Les. Goodgame.

"What's this about no dance? Come on, let's have a go."

"But the music has been sent home."

"So what! I can get some ruddy music."

"O.K., off you go."

This entailed for Les. Goodgame a walk of some considerable distance, to knock up the local "music man" and to assist him to carry the apparatus to the hall.

## On With The Dance

Open the doors—manned by Les., assisted by his wife with seven years old son set on the mineral boxes, dishing out to all and sundry "lemonades." The dance was a huge success, due entirely to the Local Treasurer and his wife refusing to be beaten. This story can be appreciated more if you take into account the fact that both Mr. Goodgame and his wife worked until late hours on the Friday preparing the fete and also all Saturday morning, soaked all day helping from when the fete commenced until the end, a quick change and on with the dance.

So we can continue the story. Comrade Fred Hibberd, Local Secretary of Charlbury was, without doubt, the hardest worked man of the whole day. As assistant fete secretary he had toiled with the Agent incessantly to put the show on, and as a sideline presented the pig for the bowling, while Mrs. Hibberd, who had undergone an operation on her ankle only one week before the fete, had played an active part in the fete preparations, played hostess to the Agent and Comrade George Kingston of Wroxton L.L.P. for the period over the fete, and looked after the ladies' bowling all day.

The final blow to Charlbury comrades was a letter from the Parish Clerk informing them the ground was no longer available to them due to a Clause in the Deed of Gift. This arrived three days after the fete. A quick decision was necessary—a taxi to Wroxton to find the Agent, some twenty miles away.

## Repeat Performance

The result: The whole show goes on again on September 25th at Chipping Norton, where the local Co-operative Society had come to the rescue and offered the use of their ground (Lord's Piece, aptly named).

Did I say Charlbury Spirit? Call it what you will—but I was very proud that very wet day to meet such people.



# Candidates : Watch These Points

The Annual Conference at Scarborough carried the following resolution:—

*The Conference notes with regret the tendency to adopt as Parliamentary Labour Candidates persons of quite recent conversion to the Labour Party. Conference therefore directs the National Executive Committee to create a national panel of possible Labour Candidates to be built up from nominations received from Constituency Labour Parties and affiliated organisations, of persons with at least twelve months' membership of the Party, provided that in case of emergency the National Executive Committee shall have power to add to the panel.*

This resolution does not alter the rules relating to the selection of Parliamentary Candidates. The procedure of selection is still that outlined in the Party Constitution and Standing Orders and the Model Rules of Constituency Labour Parties.

Individual members of the Labour Party, who are not disqualified, are eligible to be selected as Parliamentary Candidates whether or not they are on the list which is being compiled on the instruction of the Annual Conference.

This list, like the lists previously in existence, will be available to those Constituency Labour Parties which ask for it. Its purpose is to advise Constituency Labour Parties about to appoint a candidate of the people who are available to be considered, if the Parties seek such advice.

The position of Local Government Candidates is different. The procedure of selection is laid down in the Model Rules. The rules provide for a panel of Local Government Candidates, and candidates actually selected to fight seats on the local Council must be chosen from the panel.

One Clause states "that affiliated and Party organisations may nominate individual or affiliated members as candidates for Local Government Elections provided they are not disqualified under the Constitution of the Labour Party, under the decisions of its Party Conference, and under the rules as candidates for parliamentary elections."

A person is not qualified to be a

Parliamentary Candidate if, among other things, he

(a) *is not an Individual Member of the Party and, if eligible, is not a member of a Trade Union affiliated to the Trades Union Congress or recognised by the General Council of the Trades Union Congress as a bona fide Trade Union; or*

(b) *is a member of a Political Party or organisation ancillary or subsidiary thereto declared by the Annual Party Conference or by the National Executive Committee in pursuance of Conference decisions to be ineligible for affiliation to the Labour Party; or*

(c) *does not accept and conform to the Constitution, Programme, Principles, and Policy of the Party.*

It will be noted that there is no reference here to any period of individual membership though, of course, in considering nominations received for its panel of Local Government Candidates a local Labour Party will take account of the experience of the nominees in the Party, as well as of his knowledge of local government matters.

## TRADES COUNCIL HANDBOOK

A useful T.U.C. Handbook for officers and delegates of Trades Councils and Federations has just been issued under the title "Trades Council Guide." It details in clear and simple language, the objects and functions of a trades council, the organisation best suited to achieve these aims, and the part to be played by trades councils in the organisation for production.

Here is a wealth of information on such practical problems as trades council book-keeping, affiliations, weekend and day schools, and much else besides that may be helpful to the local Party secretary or treasurer as well as to those to whom it is directed. Two diagrams illustrate trade union structure and production machinery.

"Trades Councils Guide" is available from T.U.C. Publications Department, Transport House, Smith Square, S.W.1., prices, post free, 1 copy 7d., 12 copies 5s. 6d., 50 copies £1.

## Is Our System Fair ?

Nearly every week, the "Organiser" prints articles from Headquarters and Divisional Secretaries and other key Party workers, calling upon local Parties to strengthen their organisation so as to contest successfully the forthcoming elections

This is, of course, very necessary because it is only the more efficiently organised unit which will achieve success in an otherwise equally contested battle.

This letter is written solely with the intention, common to all of us in the movement, of strengthening Party organisation and, if my personal experiences are cited, it is only because I believe they may have some bearing on the question.

Transport House quite rightly approves of the scheme to have full-time Secretary-Agents in as many Divisions as possible throughout the country. While I agree with the necessity for this scheme, I question the methods of selection.

Apparently the procedure is for the vacancy to be advertised in the "Organiser," for the applicant to obtain a form from the Division Organisation and for him to complete and return it to them. A "short list" selection is then made and candidates are called for interview. So far as I am able to ascertain, those short listed for new appointments are, in the majority of cases, already existing agents. Of 12 appointments announced in your Sep-

tember issue, nine were already existing agents.

It seems to me that the arteries of the Labour Party must not be allowed to harden. Would not new blood invigorate the stream and bring a rich vitality in time for the coming struggle?

### Is it Wasteful?

I wonder whether the present method of selection is not somewhat wasteful and haphazard. During the war, the War Office very wisely decided to adopt a competitive system of selection, forming W.O.S.B.s and scrapping the old system of interview as a medium in the choice of officer.

May I give the background of my experiences, firm in the belief that there must be many similar cases in some of which experience and administrative ability has not been fully utilised?

I have been a member of the Party for 10 years, am 29 years of age, and engaged in the accountancy profession. I am President of my local Labour Party and a member of the Divisional Executive. A few months ago, I applied for two posts of Secretary-Agent, my only wish being to help the organisation of the Party in whatever way I could. Indeed, being prepared to devote my full-time to it. From one of the applications I received no reply, and from the other a reply that I had not been selected, although I had not even been interviewed.

I offered my services through the usual channels without result. I was prepared to undertake at my own expense any course that could be arranged by Headquarters for a period of a month or so, in competition with other candidates. I understand that the most successful would be chosen to assist the Party on a full-time basis, and that the others (perhaps including myself) would continue to undertake work to the best of our ability in our local areas.

It is not my intention to decry the ability of Labour Agents. My purpose in writing is to appeal for more competition for these posts, believing that the Labour Party stands not to lose but to gain.

For reasons you will understand, I enclose my name and address, but prefer to sign myself PHAEDO.

### LABOUR YOUTH IN FEATURE BROADCAST

*Representatives of the Overseas Section of the B.B.C. were the unusual visitors who attended a recent meeting of the South and Central Hackney League of Youth. They had come to collect material for a feature programme to be broadcast to German youth on "The Democratic Way of Life." They heard an address on "The Rise of the Movement" given by Councillor G. C. Carter, J.P., which was followed by a lively and interesting discussion. We hope our German colleagues will be duly impressed by this picture of Labour youth in action.*



# It's Not So Haphazard

By A. L. WILLIAMS, Assistant National Agent

The procedure for the selection of full-time agents is not so haphazard as "Phaedo" believes. Constituency Labour Parties are the employing bodies and are responsible for making the appointments of full-time agents, but they have to follow the procedure agreed upon by the Agents' Union and the National Executive Committee of the Labour Party.

The positions are advertised in the *Labour Organiser*, and sometimes in other journals as well. Applicants receive a form designed so that they may give details of their past experience of party organisation and electoral activity. While the answers to the questions on the form are obviously not sufficient to enable a party to judge the ability of the applicant, they do give some indication of his suitability for a full-time agency appointment, so that when the party is considering the applications it is able to draw up a short list and the whole of the application forms are forwarded to Head Office.

## Powers of Head Office

From the information supplied by the Regional Organisers and the Director of Study Courses, Head Office is in the position of knowing something more about the applicants than is revealed in their application forms, and has the power to delete names from the short list and to add other names.

*The actual interviews, therefore, are only part of the ordeal to which the potential full-time agent is subjected, though the impression made by an applicant on those who are considering employing him is a not unimportant factor in deciding their choice.*

Because of the war there were no local government elections or parliamentary elections until 1945, so the number of young people with a wide

knowledge of electioneering is very small. Another difficulty is the housing problem which prevents many suitable people applying for posts away from their homes. The result is that the general quality of applicants for full-time agency positions is below that regarded as necessary for an efficient agent.

While some appointments, and we agree that these represent too high a proportion of the total, represent the transfer of men from one full-time agency to another, the demand for full-time agents is greater than the supply of qualified people. There are many promising opportunities for men and women who have equipped themselves to tackle the onerous duties of a full-time agent, and though the method of selection may be improved, there is little doubt that the right kind of man will soon find a place.

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